

BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Resolution Re: Determinations and Findings

In the North Harvard Project Mass. R-54

WHEREAS, Boston Redevelopment Authority (hereinafter called the "Authority") is a public body, politic and corporate, duly organized and existing under the provisions of the Housing Authority Law of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and having a usual place of business in the City of Boston, Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS, the Authority has undertaken and conducted surveys, studies and inspections of an area in the City of Boston, known and referred to as the North Harvard Project Area (hereinafter called the "Project Area"), said area being more particularly described in Exhibit "A" attached hereto and made a part of this resolution; and

WHEREAS, the Authority has, with respect to the Project Area, reviewed extensive evidence and data with respect to said Project Area and its condition, including (a) statements prepared and presented by members of the Authority's staff, including detailed explanations of the study procedures used by the staff, detailed descriptions of the Project Area, the physical conditions and uses of land and structures therein and inspection reports respecting the physical condition of every structure in the Project Area, (b) statements, opinions and views from various interested individuals, pertaining to the conditions existing in the Project Area, and (c) taken a viewing of the Project Area;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Boston Redevelopment Authority, acting under and pursuant to its powers under the provisions of said Housing Authority Law and any other powers thereunto enabling, does hereby determine, declare and find that the Project Area is a substandard and decadent area within the definition of



Chapter 121, General Laws of Massachusetts, in that it is an area wherein dwellings predominate which by reason of dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement or design, lack of ventilation, light or sanitation facilities, and a combination of these factors, are detrimental to safety, health, morals, welfare and sound growth of the Boston Community, and that is an area which is detrimental to safety, health, morals, welfare and the sound growth of the Boston Community because of the existence of buildings which are out of repair, physically deteriorated, obsolete or in need of major maintenance and repair, and because buildings have been torn down and not replaced and in which under existing conditions it is improbable that the buildings will be replaced, and because of a substantial change in business and economic conditions, and because of inadequate light, air and open space, and because diversity of ownership, irregular lot sizes and obsolete street patterns make it improbable that the area will be redeveloped by the ordinary operations of private enterprise.

Be it further resolved that the Boston Redevelopment Authority does hereby determine, declare and find the following particular facts to be true and correct:

1. The North Harvard Project Area contains 9.3 gross acres, of which 3.8 acres are devoted to streets, 3.4 acres are developed with buildings and yards, and 2.1 acres are vacant undeveloped land.

2. The Project Area contains fifty-two major structures. Of these, 50 or 96.2 per cent are devoted to residential use, two or 3.8 per cent are non-residential, one of which is vacant and boarded up, and is located on a primarily residential parcel with two residential buildings and the other is a small variety store.

3. The Project Area contains approximately 89,475 square feet of floor space; of this amount, approximately 14,782 square feet or 16.5 per cent are vacant. Of the fifty-two buildings, three or 5.8 per cent were totally vacant.



4. Vacant dwelling units numbered 12 or 14.3 per cent of a total of eighty-four dwelling units, as compared with a city average of 6 per cent. Only one structure has been erected since 1925. Three structures have been demolished and not replaced during the same period.

5. Of the fifty-two major structures contained in the project area, 39 or 75.0 per cent were given a thorough interior examination and 52 or 100 per cent were given a thorough exterior examination. 84 dwelling units were contained in the 50 residential buildings; of these, 61 or 72.6 per cent were given a thorough examination. The detailed interior and exterior inspections of the principle buildings throughout the area discloses that:

- (a) 52 or 100 per cent had one or more deficiencies.
- (b) 34 or 65.4 per cent had five or more deficiencies.
- (c) 24 or 46.2 per cent had ten or more deficiencies.
- (d) 22 or 56.4 per cent of the buildings examined had evidence of cracks in inside walls and/or ceilings.
- (e) 21 or 53.8 per cent of the buildings examined had loose and/or broken base material on inside walls and/or ceilings.
- (f) 17 or 43.6 per cent of the buildings examined had flooring which was worn, loose and/or missing.
- (g) 21 or 53.8 per cent of the buildings examined had floors which were sagging or pitched.
- (h) 14 or 35.9 per cent of the buildings examined lacked central heat for each dwelling unit.
- (i) 22 or 56.4 per cent of the buildings examined lacked continuous hot running water.
- (j) 20 or 51.3 per cent of the buildings examined lacked two electrical outlets in each habitable room.
- (k) 30 or 76.9 per cent of the buildings examined had exposed electrical wiring.
- (l) 9 or 23.1 per cent of the buildings examined had impervious basement floors which were broken, deteriorated or missing.



- (m) 14 or 35.9 per cent of the buildings examined contained an accumulation of combustible debris creating a fire hazard.
- (n) 19 or 48.7 per cent of the buildings examined had dampness or water in the basement.
- (o) 10 or 36.5 per cent of the buildings examined had foundation walls which were deteriorated, sinking and/or out of line.
- (p) 18 or 34.6 per cent of the buildings examined had exterior walls which were out of plumb and/or horizontal alignment.
- (q) 17 or 32.7 per cent of the buildings examined had chimneys which were deteriorated and/or out of alignment.
- (r) 25 or 48.9 per cent of the buildings examined had exterior siding which was loose, missing or deteriorated.
- (s) 31 or 59.6 per cent of the buildings examined had window frames, sashed and/or panes which were loose, broken and/or deteriorated or missing.
- (t) 26 or 50.0 per cent of the buildings examined had exterior stairs and/or railings which were worn, deteriorated, broken and/or missing.
- (u) 17 or 32.7 per cent of the buildings examined had porch flooring and/or railings loose, missing or deteriorated.
- (v) 19 or 36.5 per cent of the buildings examined had porch structural members and/or piers deteriorated, out of plumb and/or out of alignment.

6. The street pattern of the Project Area is totally obsolete and the streets within the Project Area are little more than unpaved vehicle paths. Twenty-five foot rights-of-way which exist in the Project Area are insufficient for installation of proper sidewalks, curbs and gutters and leave only enough room for two vehicles to pass each other. Many of the structures abut the rights-of-way making it impossible to acquire the additional width needed



to construct adequate modern streets without extensive demolition of existing structures. There is no provision for adequate drainage or proper grading of the existing street rights-of-way resulting in potholes and low areas that fill with water. Street lighting is distributed from poorly located and generally inadequate sources along interior streets in the area.

7. The unsatisfactory environmental living conditions are marked by (1) incompatible industrial land usage across Western Avenue; and (2) a location between two heavily traveled streets - Western and North Harvard. Proper screening from the traffic and incompatible land usage across Western Avenue is not possible under the present development.

8. Besides abutting on Western and North Harvard Streets, the Project Area is adjacent to institutionally owned property, thereby creating a situation where the area is literally landlocked. This leaves owners with no room nor desire to expand or develop either within or without the Project Area. This has contributed to the continual steady downhill deterioration in the Project Area. This is evidenced generally by the present existence of the physical deterioration of the structures, and more particularly, by the fact that only one structure has been erected since 1925, three structures have been demolished and not replaced and one major structure is abandoned and in a dilapidated state. The cumulative effect of the physical blight and the existence of the environmental factors contributing to the continual deterioration of the Project Area are such as to make conservation and rehabilitation infeasible and to make it improbable that the existing conditions will be corrected and that the remainder of the Project Area will be developed by the ordinary operations of private enterprise.



EXHIBIT "A"

Beginning at the intersection of the extended northerly sideline of Smith Street with the northwesterly sideline of North Harvard Street; thence running in an easterly direction across North Harvard Street by the aforesaid extended sideline of Smith Street and by the north sideline of Smith Street to a point in the north sideline of Smith Street which is the intersection of a line from the northwest corner of land now or formerly of the New England Deposit Library extended through the intersection of the center lines of that portion of Smith Street running in a northwest southeast direction with that portion of Smith Street running in a northeast southwest direction.

thence turning and running in a southerly direction by the aforedescribed line across Smith Street to a point which is the northern corner of land now or formerly of the President and Fellows of Harvard College;

thence turning and running in a southwesterly direction by the western property line of said land now or formerly of the President and Fellows of Harvard College to a point which is the northern corner of land now or formerly of the Massachusetts Bay Telecasters, Inc.;

thence turning and running in a southeasterly direction by the northeastern property line of said now or formerly Massachusetts Bay Telecasters, Inc. to a point which is the northwesterly corner of land now or formerly of the New England Deposit Library located at 135 Western Avenue.

thence turning and running in a southerly direction by the westerly property line of said now or formerly New England Deposit Library and by said line extended to the southern sideline of Western Avenue;

Exhibit "A" Continued - 2-

thence turning and running in a westerly direction by the southerly sideline of Western Avenue to a point which is the intersection of said southerly sideline of Western Avenue with the northwesterly sideline of North Harvard Street;

thence turning and running in a northeasterly direction by the northwesterly sideline of North Harvard Street to the point of beginning.



